

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 383

By Walley

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Betty "Jo" Matherne of Brownsville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of former Brownsville Mayor Betty "Jo" Matherne, an exemplary public servant and businesswoman who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born on October 5, 1949, in Brownsville, Ms. Matherne was the daughter of Judge Kirby Matherne and Bettie Matherne; she attended Brownsville public schools as well as the University of Tennessee (UT), where she earned a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in communication; and

WHEREAS, Jo Matherne began a career in Knoxville in marketing and public relations at City and County Bank and continued her work at Valley Fidelity Bank; she then formed her own marketing and public relations firm, Matherne Marketing; and

WHEREAS, during her time in Knoxville, Ms. Matherne was active in various organizations within her community in a host of capacities, including the UT Alumni Association, which she served as a member, leader, and supporter; the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra's Young Professionals organization; and Knoxville Opera Guild, which she formerly served as president; and

WHEREAS, she was a 1989 graduate and involved alumna of Leadership Knoxville and a founding member of the Knoxville area Executive Women's Association, which she served as president from 1992 to 1993; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, Jo Matherne returned to her hometown and began work in marketing and public relations for InSouth Bank; and

WHEREAS, she made an immediate impact in numerous organizations in Brownsville and Haywood County; she served with the Haywood Heritage Foundation; the Brownsville

Rotary Club; the Brownsville Arts Council, where she assumed various leadership and board positions; Habitat for Humanity, as a member of the State board; and Daughters of the American Revolution at the local, regional, and State levels; and

WHEREAS, her experience as an alumna of Leadership Knoxville afforded her the opportunity to work with Leadership Haywood, Delta Leadership, and the WestStar Leadership programs; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Matherne took an interest in political matters, and in 2010, she ran for mayor; when she was elected mayor of Brownsville, she became the first female mayor of the city; and

WHEREAS, Jo Matherne served the City of Brownsville as mayor from 2010 to 2014, running an administration with integrity and responsiveness; in 2013, she received a Sterling Award, recognizing her as one of the twenty most influential women in West Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, following her tenure as mayor, Ms. Matherne took a position with the Southwest Tennessee Development District, where she made an impact on the vocation education programs in the public high schools of several West Tennessee counties; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Matherne was a member of the Brownsville First United Methodist Church, where she assumed various leadership roles, particularly in the church's finance department; and

WHEREAS, Jo Matherne was deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, she enjoyed the loving companionship of Richard H. "Dick" Meschendorf, Jr., until the time of his passing; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Matherne leaves to mourn her memory her siblings, Jean M. Avery, Debra M. (David) Jones, Louis K. (Chris) Matherne, Jr., and Graham (Suzanne) Matherne; three stepchildren, Richard H. (Joy) Meschendorf III, James K. (Stacy) Meschendorf, and Martha G. (Mike) Wilds; one niece; five nephews; three grand-nieces; two grand-nephews; and five step-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Matherne leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Betty "Jo" Matherne, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Ms. Matherne.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.